

April 2006 Newsletter



Earth Day in the Nature Preserve

What a great day it was! No rain and lots of sunshine. Smiling faces on people as they enjoyed the beautiful treasures of a special place. Thanks go to Dr. Rosemarie White of the Canada Goose Project, who organized this Fifth Annual Earth Day (Sunday, April 2nd) in the Chatsworth Nature Preserve, and to DWP, who allowed the event to take place, plus all the volunteers who made it happen.

The speakers were Jarron Lucas, Rosemarie White, and City Councilman Greig Smith. The councilman spoke to us about the future of the nature preserve, assuring that it will always be protected.

Visitors seemed entranced with the live animals that were brought in for the day. They had been rehabilitated from their injuries and now serve to educate young and old. A golden eagle (Wildlife Waystation), redtailed hawk (Camarillo Wildlife Rehabilitation), barn owl and screech owl (Wildlife Care of Ventura County) were there to greet us and to teach us, through their handlers, about the pure beauty of nature as well as such things as why rat poison should NEVER be used (it destroys wildlife right up the food chain). Members of the Southwestern Herpatologists Society displayed various reptiles and amphibians and answered questions. Christa Mann, Field Rep for the Mountain Lion Foundation, had a wonderful storyboard set-up and shared information about this magnificent species who still exists--but in fewer numbers--in our mountainous areas.

Merrily Lovell led educational tours around the ecology pond and along one side of the reservoir, sharing the interesting history and myriad facts pertaining to the decommissioned facility. The ecology pond attracts many birds and migratory fowl and is especially important because a number of wetlands, primarily in North America, are disappearing due to development.

Residents living nearby and those who traveled from afar were grateful for the opportunity to be allowed inside the fenced preserve and walk the paths that are usually off limits to the public. On Earth Day in the Nature Preserve, all are welcome and many come to enjoy and appreciate!

General Membership Meeting - Monday, April 17, 2005

We are happy to welcome Linda Jones from the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society, who will give us a slide presentation and lecture about our local birds.

Linda has a B.S. in Medical Technology, an M.A. in Microbiology and a Ph.D. in Science Education. She worked for 10 years in hospitals and research labs and found an opportunity to teach while serving in the Peace Corps in Ethiopia. Having decided she liked teaching, after suitable preparation, Linda taught at CSUN for 28 years.

After retirement, Linda increased her activity level with the San Fernando Valley Audubon Society. One of her many jobs there was newsletter editor for 8 years.

Linda is also active in the CSUN Association of Retired Faculty, for whom she organized and currently leads a monthly bird walk. Earlier this month, SFV Audubon members awarded Linda a Conservation Award at Audubon's Centennial banquet.

Please join us for a colorful and interesting evening!

SSMPA General Membership Program meetings take place every 3rd Monday September through November and January through May at the Rockpointe Clubhouse, 22300 Devonshire, Chatsworth, on the south side, 1 block before entering Chatsworth Park South. Our program meetings begin at 7:15 p.m. and conclude at 9:00 p.m.



Jarron Lucas, Southwestern Herpatologists Society, Greig Smith, City Councilman 12th Dist., Rosemarie White, Canada Goose Project

Progress Report: Chatsworth Trails Park Restoration Project

We've made great progress - after only three organized clean-up dates, Save Chatsworth volunteers have already filled 3 dumpster loads of trash, filled a green waste roll-off bin with weeds and brush, removed graffiti from rocks, repaired portions of the trail, and planted a small test garden of wildflower seed.

At our last clean-up date, we had a total of 24 volunteers to work, including a number of students from our local schools. Many thanks to the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association for donating pizza, and to Andre and Linda van der Valk for donating water! In addition, several SSMPA members volunteered time to work on the project.

Our projected future cleanup dates are April 22 or 23, April 29 or 30, May 6 or 7 and May 20 or 21. More details to follow.

Please visit www.savechatsworth.org for more information and to see photos of our clean-up progress, e-mail us at info@savechatsworth.org, or call (818) 464-3472 for more information. *Vanessa Watters*

Garden Festival - Sunday, April 30th, 11:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Chatsworth Historical Society is presenting two new features at this year's Annual Garden Festival: a quilt display from the Veterans Quilt Project, and an "Old Timers" family reunion in the Museum, hosted by Virginia Watson and featuring information about members from the early Johnson, Hill and Miranda families.

As in previous years, the other entertaining features of the festival will be the vendor booths, plant sale, bake sale, white elephant sale, Polynesian dancers and Duchess' High Tea. Artist Susan Rios will have her paintings on display and for sale. See you there!

They could always use more help with freshly-baked goods and white elephant items. Call Bea Berman at (818) 341-5449.

EarthWalk LA

Join in celebration of Earth Day and supporting the efforts of the LA Community College District working in collaboration with Tree People, an environmental organization, to establish curriculum, policies and workshops for our current and future generations to come.

This second annual EarthWalk LA is in honor of LACCD's commitment to green principles.

Date: Saturday, April 22. Walks begin 10:00 a.m.

Location: LA Pierce College, 6201 Winnetka Ave., Woodland Hills.

Website: www.earthwalkla.com

Phone: (213) 593-8010

Email: earthwalkla@dmjmgm.com

The purposes of the Santa Susana Mountain Park Association are the protection, preservation, restoration, and enhancement of the Santa Susana Mountains and Simi Hills as open space lands and wildlife corridors linking the Los Padres National Forest and San Gabriel Mountains, including the Angeles National Forest, to the Santa Monica Mountains; as habitats for plants and animals native to the Santa Susana Mountains and the Simi Hills; as locales of unique geologic formations; as sites of ethnological, archaeological and historical interests; to provide passive recreational opportunities and environmental education opportunities; and, to support the acquisition of new public parks, open space and conservation easements, the expansion of existing parks, participate in the planning of park infrastructure and programs, and support said programs.

Thank you for renewing your SSMPA membership!

Mary McMannes, Hannah Almstead, Theresa Brady, Paul Dentzel, Wendy Brunell, Dorian & Dalia Keyser, Marillyn Holmes, Bob Wood, Gerald & Carolyn Murphy, Natalie Krah & Todd Doherty, Joanne Woodruff, George Banks.



Christa Mann, Mountain Lion Foundation



Screech Owl

The photographs found throughout this issue were taken by Reid Bogert and Helen Cesny. Thank you both!

"A long, long time ago the creator - and who knows how many great beings - gave the people a language. At this time stories were born. Stories mirror our world. At the same time they are like rays of sunlight, illuminating dark places so that we can see more clearly."

Georgiana Sanchez, Chumash story teller

U P C O M I N G H I K E S

Bring water, lunch, lugsoles, hat, sunscreen. Rain cancels.

Sun., 4/16: Stagecoach Trail - 9:00 a.m. Interpretative hike into history in our Santa Susana Pass State Historic Park. Meet at 9:00 am for a 4 mi (700' gain) loop up the Stage Coach Trail. From Topanga Canyon lvd., turn W on Devonshire, drive into Chatsworth Park S to the 2nd parking lot. Ldr: Lee Baum (818) 341-1850. *Sierra Club (Santa Susana Mtns Task Force) Outing.*

Sun., 4/23: Towsley Cyn. Loop Trail - 9:00 a.m. Moderately-paced, 5 mi, 600' gain hike in Ed Davis/Towsley Cyn Pk. Meet entrance to Ed Davis Pk, (take Calgrove exit from 1-5 Fwy, W back under fwy, take The Old Rd S, R $\frac{1}{2}$ mi to entrance on R, take dirt rd to Nature Ctr and parking lot. Ldrs: Ray Lorme, Ed Benison. *Sierra Club (Santa Clarita) Outing.*

Sun., 4/23: Topanga State Pk/Dead Horse Trail - 10:00 a.m. Easy-paced 3-4 mi family walk. Meet at Dead Horse fee parking lot (take Topanga Cyn Bl to Entrada, E, park on small lot 200 yards after turn - \$3 parking fee). Ldr: Ramona Dunn, Ants Leps, Virve Leps. *Sierra Club (Santa Monica Mtns. Task Force) Outing.*

Tues., 4/25: Ahmanson Ranch - 8:30 a.m. 4-5 mi, easy pace. Enjoy our newly acquired Santa Monica Mtns Conservancy land of oaks and rolling hills. 700' gain. Meet at Victory Blvd. trailhead (from 101 Fwy W, exit Valley Circle Blvd, R (N) 3 mi to Vanowen, L $\frac{3}{4}$ mi to gate on L, park). Ldrs: Pixie Klemic, Steve Rudolph, Ramona Dunn. *Sierra Club (SFV) Outing.*

Thurs. 4/27 - Welson Cyn Overlook - 8:00 a.m. Moderately-paced 8 mi, 1200' gain hike on newly opened trail with BFI-planted oaks as a condition of landfill expansion, through oaks, black walnut and fir trees with views of Santa Clarita and San Fernando Valleys. Meet at E Cyn. Trailhead, Newhall (take Calgrove exit from N I-5, L (W) under freeway, take The Old Rd S 1 mi to parking entrance after church on R, continue past trailhead sign to parking area; \$3 parking fee). Bring 2 qts water, lunch, lugsoles, hat, sunscreen. Rain cancels. Ldrs: Bob Galletly, Nancy Krupa. *Sierra Club (San Fernando Valley) Outing.*

Tues., 5/2 - Cold Creek Cyn Trail - 8:30 a.m. Easy-paced 4-6 mi, 800' gain hike through 2 beautiful canyons in the Santa Monicas, including Cold Creek Preserve. Meet at Stunt Rd parking lot (from 101 Fwy, exit Valley Cir/Mulholland Dr S, R on Valmar Rd, becomes Old Topanga Cyn Rd, R on Mulholland Hwy 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ mi to Stunt Rd, L on Stunt Rd 1 mi; parking on shoulder). Ldrs: Marcia Harris, Ramona Dunn. *Sierra Club (SFV/Santa Monica Mtns. Task Force) Outing.*

Tues., 5/9 - O'Melveny Pk/Bee Cyn/Mission Pk - 8:30 a.m. Easy-paced 4-6 mi, 1200' gain hike. Meet at trailhead (Balboa Blvd N, L on Orocozo to Sesnon, L past parking lot, 4-5 blocks to Neon R, park at end of street; possible parking fee). Ldrs: Pixie Klemic, Ramona Dunn. *Sierra Club (SFV) Outing.*



Red Squirrel
life size in mud

WATERSHED-U TUJUNGA

Are you interested in: seeing the Los Angeles River revitalized? Improving our water quality? Increasing habitat? Enhancing quality of life in your community? Having more trails and bikeways? Securing more a locally available water supply? Watershed-U is for you!! This workshop series covering the water resources, natural history & the environment of the Tujunga Watershed.

The River Project will conduct **Watershed-U Tujunga**, a six-week, one evening per week, course about the natural, cultural, historic, social, and political aspects of the Tujunga Watershed. The Tujunga is the largest subwatershed of the Los Angeles River watershed. Covering over 225 square miles, it has both some of the most densely urban, and most undisturbed natural lands in Los Angeles. Its habitats range from conifer and hardwood forests, to rare alluvial fan scrub to the common asphalt jungle. Its three main tributaries are the Big Tujunga, Little Tujunga and Pacoima Washes. Because it also includes lands atop the San Fernando Valley aquifer, it has the potential – if managed differently – to provide us with a roadmap for a more sustainable future in Los Angeles.

Watershed U-Tujunga will present 4-6 experts of regional and statewide importance each evening to discuss varying aspects and opinions regarding watershed resources and watershed management. Presenters will include elected, policy, and technical representatives from numerous local and State agencies as well as environmental nonprofit organizations. Participants will emerge from **Watershed U-Tujunga** with greater knowledge of the Tujunga Watershed, an understanding of management and restoration trends locally and statewide, and the capacity to participate effectively in watershed efforts in the San Fernando Valley.

When: 6:30pm-9:30pm; six consecutive Mondays including April 17& 24, May 1, 8, 15, & 22.

Where: Los Angeles Valley College-Cafeteria Conference Room, 5800 Fulton Avenue, Van Nuys, California 91401.

Cost: \$30.00 materials fee per person *Registration is limited to 100 people on a first come, first serve basis.*

To register for **Watershed-U Tujunga** online go to: www.theriverproject.org/tujunga/watershedu.html

For more information, please contact Suzanne Avila, ph. no. (626) 969-2491; fax no. (818) 980-0700 bugszanne@msn.com

The River Project is a non-profit organization based in Studio City whose mission is to encourage responsible management of our watershed lands. With funding from CALFED Bay-Delta Watershed Program, The River Project is currently developing the Tujunga Watershed Management Plan. Watershed-U Tujunga is designed to increase environmental literacy and to encourage community participation in the creation and implementation of the Plan.

The following is a summary of an article on the Platinum Green Building--Cal/EPA that SSMPA Board Member/Treasurer Diana Dixon-Davis toured while in Sacramento recently. Gov. Schwarzenegger supports green buildings for all of the State buildings.

Greening Your Building Toward Your Bottom Line

Thomas Properties Group, Inc. developed the Joe Serna Jr. / Cal/EPA Headquarters Building project as a Public-Private partnership with the City of Sacramento. The project is a response to the State of California Department of General Services RFP for a new build-to-suit headquarters for the California Environmental Protection Agency. The 25-story, 950,000 square foot office building was completed in early 2001 and is located in downtown Sacramento. It still stands today as the city's largest commercial high-rise real estate development project. The Joe Serna Jr. / Cal/EPA Building is recognized nationally as one of the most energy efficient and sustainable commercial office developments in the country.

As operators of this 950,000 square foot project, Thomas Properties Group (TPG) has incorporated state of the art green building practices. All janitorial, maintenance, tenant improvements, and equipment replacements are carried out incorporating practices and materials that improve air quality, reduce energy usage, and maximize resource re-utilization, reduction, and recycling/recyclables.

In having Cal/EPA as the sole tenant and their mission statement for the headquarters building being "reducing their environmental footprint in and around the building", it's safe to say that incorporating these state of the art green building practices is much easier here than in a multi-tenanted building. TPG has found that this building has become a perfect laboratory to determine if these practices can work in a class A environment. A nice surprise we found after the implantation of these practices was that our operating expenses significantly reduced. We found out that these practices were not only good for the environment, but also good for business.

Our first green building practice that was rolled out was our recycling program. California Integrated Waste requested that TPG put together this program and in 2001, we did. The program called, "Gone Today - Here Tomorrow - Recycle" turned the staffs normal trash can into a mixed paper recycle bin and gave each tenant their own desk top small garbage can. In addition to the desk side mix paper bin we have 210 three in one bins that collect white paper, cans bottles and glass and mixed paper.

The program enables every trashcan to realize its potential and become a recycling container. Cal/EPA is already accustomed to removing bottles, cans and plastic from the waste stream. By eliminating the wet garbage from the desk side container there is no reason to line with a plastic bag. We create a "pulp" receptacle, the contents of which are entirely recyclable. With the size of this building, we will eliminate approximately 1,700 cases annually of plastic bags from the waste stream.

Our average cost per ton of material disposed of at the landfill is approximately \$50.00. Therefore, the diversion of 202.7 tons of material saved our operation \$10,135. The elimination of garbage can liners in each office space eliminated \$65,000 in annual purchases. Likewise, the use of reusable cloth bags in the centrally located recycling bins saves \$27,000 per year.

We originally budgeted for trash removal 3 times per week. The cost for removal is the same if the bin is full or half-full. Managing our waste stream, we have been able to cut our trash removal pick-ups to less than twice a month. With 3,000 employees, that is a huge savings. The average cost for waste removal in downtown Sacramento is \$0.05 p.s.f., with our limited pick-ups and recycling programs, we are actually making money in our waste account.

When the electricity crunch of 2000/2001 began in California, Thomas Properties Group began exploring new and creative ways to reduce energy usage immediately. We put together a plan to have the janitorial staff clean mostly during daylight hours (when occupants are in the building working) thereby reducing the amount of after hour lighting needed to provide the same service.

After convincing our tenant that this would work, it was implemented in January of 2002. On the day of its implementation the State of California's Governor asked that all State Agencies find a way to reduce their energy consumption by eight (8%) percent. Upon implementation of this schedule the Joe Serna Jr. Cal/EPA Headquarters Building was already reducing consumption by this amount.

Currently, the janitorial staff cleans during the day rather than at night thus preventing all of the lights being turned on at night to allow for cleaning. The schedule is set up so that the day crew comes in at 11:00 am and begins the dusting, cleaning, and silent vacuum cleaning of the building (vac's similar to what you would see in a movie theater). This work also includes the removal of recycled materials. This work is completed around 5:00 pm. From 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm they remove the wet garbage. From 6:00 pm - 8:00 pm they clean restrooms just using core lights.

At 6:00 pm all staff lighting is shut off. Interior restroom and corridor lights are left on so that these areas can be cleaned and completed by 8:00 pm. The carpet cleaning and floor maintenance is performed by a five person utility crew from 5:30 pm until 2:00 am. Their work is typically focused on one floor and we will then turn on the lights only in the area they are working.

As a result of this change we have not only reduced energy consumption by 8% but also incurred utility savings' of \$100,000 annually. As all property managers know, the majority of tenant complaints are regarding janitorial issues. Now that the employees see our janitorial staff working, our janitorial complaints have dropped more than 70%. This equates to \$110,000 of additional labor hours. The tenants have now become our janitor's supervisors, thus eliminating the calls to property management regarding thefts. Furthermore, since the working hours are ending earlier, for the first time in their janitorial careers, they are able to put their children to bed at night. This has reduced our staff turnover significantly and eliminated continuous training.

Thomas Properties Group and Cal/EPA are committed to minimizing waste from our building, and our Waste Reduction Program is continually looking for creative, cost effective ways of making the building's operations more resource efficient. Worm bins were introduced to the building in 2001 and have been proven to be a huge success. These worms are kept in small plastic containers with lids that fit neatly under a desk or a side chair. The worms live amongst a bedding material made of fiber, peat moss, and other organic materials. Their diet consists of fruit and vegetable scraps left over from staff's meals that are buried in the bedding material. Staff who participate are lovingly called "Worm Wranglers" and tend to the worms' needs. A worm's needs are few: a little moisture, regular feedings, and an occasional change of bedding. The by-product of this process, worm castings or worm manure, is used as a nutrient rich soil amendment in the landscaping around the building.

We also promote large-scale vermicomposting through our café. The staff are utilizing a vermicomposting system to manage the organic materials generated during food preparation in our on-site cafeteria. This bin is located inside the loading dock; the café workers can easily transport the material collected each day. This organic material collected each day is placed in the bin for processing by approximately 30,000 worms. The finished product, worm castings, is again used in the landscape around the building.

We have estimated that our vermicomposting program is diverting approximately 10 tons of waste from landfills.

Indoor Air Quality has always been a big concern for TPG and we were committed to not introduce chemicals into the building that would affect air quality. We will only use low or zero V.O.C. and non-odorous chemicals. We have reduced our daily cleaning chemicals to only three and one we use 70% of the time. We have an integrated pest management program that uses only baiting and trapping.

In 2003, we introduced waterless urinals to the building. TPG held a ribbon cutting ceremony along with an orientation program educating the tenants. This pilot program on four floors has been very successful with no smell and no longer any work orders for stuck valves or continuous running water. In looking over work orders for a 12-month period prior to this installation, we noted we had 110 labor hours of engineers repairing urinals. When implemented throughout the building, we will save over 1,000,000 gallons of water annually.

Thomas Properties Group has also created an employee merit system called Employee Achievement Rewards System (E.A.R.S.) for contract employees rewarding them for quantifiable operational savings ideas. After the first year of implementation, we paid out over \$10,000 resulting in over \$100,000 of net operational savings.

We stated earlier that these practices were not only good for the environment but also good for business. Our bottom line savings are approximately \$1.00 p.s.f. less than downtown Sacramento averages. That is \$1,000,000 per year and then put a 7% capitalization rate and over \$14,000,000 of value has been added the building. An additional benefit would be from the marketing side. What a tremendous way to differentiate yourself from your competition in a stale real estate economy!

Foundation for the Preservation of the Santa Susana Mountains

“Help Save Our Local Natural Areas”

On Saturday, 4/29/06

- Join us at Casa de Carlos 5:30-6:30 PM for a “Meet & Greet”, social hour
- Buy your own drinks
- Stay for a wonderful Mexican buffet-dinner including dessert at \$18.95 per adult, \$8.50 for children under 10 years old, starting at 6:30 PM
- Casa de Carlos will give percentage to FPSSM.

Ask a Casa de Carlos’ Hostess for a flyer!

If you have any questions please call:

- Pearl Turbush, President of FPSSM (661) 242-5506
- Nancy Razanski, Vice President of FPSSM (818) 341-3512

RSVP by 4/15/06

Make checks payable to FPSSM

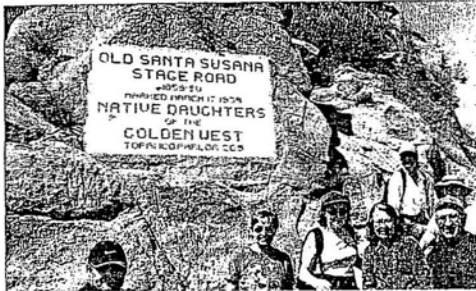
Mail to PO Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA. 91313-4831



Thank you, Casa de Carlos for your generous support!

FPSSM is a 501c3 organization, if you are unable to make this fundraising event, and would like to give a tax-deductible donation; we would greatly appreciate it!

**Address: 20549 Devonshire St. (corner of Mason)
Phone: 818-993-1534**



Santa Susana Mountain Park Association

invites you to JOIN / RENEW (circle one).

Investing in the future of our communities and its resources is probably one of the best expenditures of our time and efforts. Return this cutoff with your contribution lend your support. Make your check payable to SSMPA and send to SSMPA, P.O. Box 4831, Chatsworth, CA 91313-4831.

- Senior or Student ((\$10.00)
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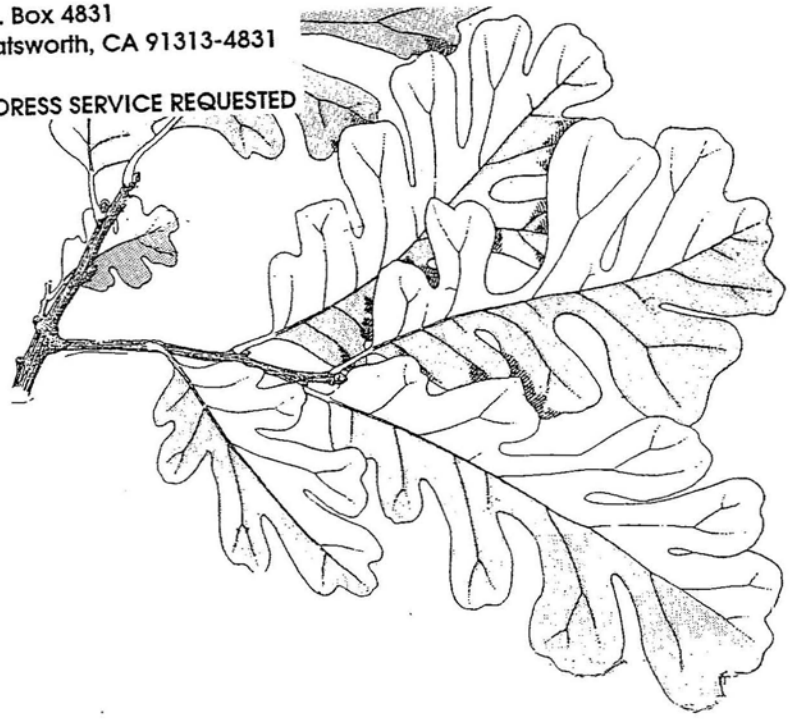
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